



West Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel

Draft Minutes

14th June 2024, Old Court Room, Town Hall, Wakefield

PRESENT:	Councillor Eileen Taylor	- Leeds Council
	Councillor Nicole Sharpe	- Leeds Council
	Councillor Andrew Carter	- Leeds Council
	Councillor Nusrat Mohammed	- Bradford Council
	Councillor Celia Hickson	- Bradford Council
	Councillor Chris Hayden	- Bradford Council
	Councillor Branda Monteith	- Calderdale Council
	Councillor Shazad Fazal	- Calderdale Council
	Councillor Anthony Smith	- Kirklees Council
	Councillor Jackie Ferguson	- Wakefield Council
	Councillor Lynn Masterman	- Wakefield Council
	Mrs Joanne Sykes	- Independent
	Mr Trevor Lake	- Independent
	In attendance	
	Tracy Brabin	- Mayor of West Yorkshire
	Alison Lowe	- Dep Mayor Policing and Crime Nominee
	Julie Reid	- West Yorkshire Combined Authority
	Wendy Stevens	- West Yorkshire Combined Authority
	John Robins	- West Yorkshire Police
	Russ Hughes	- West Yorkshire Police
	Sharon Fraser	- Wakefield Council
	Joanne Freeman	- Wakefield Council
	Samantha Wilkinson	- Wakefield Council
	Fiona Bernardo	- Wakefield Council

1. Appointment of Chair

- 1.1 Cllr Eileen Taylor was elected as Chair of the Panel for 2024/25, and Cllr Lynn Masterman was elected as Vice-Chair for the same period.

2. Police and Crime Panel Membership

- 2.1 The membership of the Panel for 2024/25 was noted and Panel endorsed the appointment of the two local authority co-opted Panel members.

2.2 The Chair welcomed the new members on to the Panel.

3. Acceptance of apologies for absence

3.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Gwen Lowe.

4. To approve, as a correct record and deal with any matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Police and Crime Panel held on 12th April 2024.

4.1. The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

5. To note any items which the Chair has agreed to add to the agenda on the grounds of urgency

5.1 The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent items to add to the agenda.

6. Members' Declaration of Interests

6.1 There were no declarations of interest.

7. Panel Arrangements and Rules of Conduct of Business

7.1 The Panel reviewed the Police and Crime Panel Arrangements and Rules of Conduct of Business to ensure that they up to date and remain fit for purpose. There were no proposed changes to the Procedures and Protocols at this time.

7.2 RESOLVED

7.2.1 Panel endorsed the existing Panel Arrangements and Rules of Conduct of Business as set out.

8. Complaints Received by the Police and Crime Panel - Annual Update

8.1 The Complaints Chair introduced the update report, which showed the number of complaints received by the Police and Crime Panel over the 2023/24 municipal year. Panel had received complaints from 17 different complainants (often multiple times from the same complainant), in addition to numerous telephone calls from people who wished to remain anonymous.

8.2 There was one recorded complaint which had been ongoing at the time of the report, but had since been concluded. The complaint had not been upheld and both parties had been notified of the outcome.

8.3 The Police and Crime Panel had been notified of one complaint to the Information Commissioner’s Office regarding a response to a Freedom of Information Request. The outcome of this complaint is not yet known.

8.4 RESOLVED

8.4.1 Panel noted the report.

9. Review of Panel Complaints and Misconduct Procedure

9.1 The Police and Crime Officer explained that the Complaints and Misconduct Procedure is reviewed annually to ensure it is up to date and compliant with statutory requirements. As part of this process, some amendments to the wording had been proposed to further clarify the role and responsibilities in relation to complaints.

9.2 None of the recommended changes alter the process that is currently followed and have been made to improve the wording, provide further clarity around the process and eliminate ambiguity around the roles of the Police and Crime Panel, the Police and Crime Officer(s) and the Monitoring Officer.

9.3 RESOLVED

9.3.1 Panel approved the suggested amendments highlighted in the document.

10. Panel Budget Outcome 2023/24 and Draft Budget 2024/25

10.1 The Home Office have not yet announced their 2024/25 settlement for Police and Crime Panels, so the item was proposed to be deferred until this is available, which is likely to be July or August of this year. A draft budget will be provided to Panel as soon as possible afterwards.

10.2 RESOLVED

10.2.1 That the Panel budget paper be deferred until the Home Office funding is available.

11. Performance Reporting

11.1 The Mayor introduced her report, which is categorised under the four stated priorities from the Mayor’s Police and Crime Plan. The report is brought to Panel each quarter

and contains an overview of measures from the Police and Crime Plan; this is detailed data which helps the Mayor to effectively hold the Chief Constable to account.

- 11.2 Panel noted the national changes in crime recording which have been mandated to all police forces in England and Wales, and asked the Mayor if she could highlight areas of the performance report which might have been affected by this. The Mayor believed that numbers for crimes such as anti-social behaviour, road traffic offences, stalking, rape, and domestic abuse were particularly affected – where these were often previously recorded as a number of crimes, only the ‘principal offence’ is now recorded. This change has affected West Yorkshire’s stats more than other Forces due to its previously high levels of crime recording. The Mayor assured Panel that she is mindful of these reporting changes in her meetings with the Chief Constable and Deputy Chief Constable, and that she was confident that investigations into these crimes have remained at the same level, despite changes in performance monitoring data. As a further safeguard, the Mayor’s Policing and Crime Team triangulate the data, and look at repeat offences, and investigation numbers in addition to targets and actual numbers of offences, to obtain a more holistic picture of each crime type.

The Chief Constable confirmed that the main crimes affected by the change in reporting were public order, damage and malicious communication and that the decision as to which crime to record is made using a fully tested process and framework, which is reviewed constantly. He committed to bringing a professional assessment of the effect of the changes in reporting to the Mayor and DMPC nominee at a future date, which could potentially be shared with the Panel. He additionally confirmed that levels of care and welfare for victims of domestic abuse had remained the same, and was improving further.

- 11.3 The Mayor was asked a question around how she planned to address the gap between figures which show a decrease in many crimes, and the public perception that crime is increasing.

The Mayor agreed that this was a challenge, and that the fear of crime was an important consideration for her when she was developing her first Police and Crime Plan. She referenced the fact that most crime isn’t visible on the street, and is prioritised by level of threat by police forces. She acknowledged the need for reassurance however, and she drew Panel’s attention to the introduction of PCSOs on buses, and how this has helped to reassure bus passengers. She believed that devolution can help address these issues through a cross cutting partnership approach with sectors such as housing, skills, transport and the environment through initiatives such as the safer parks work with the University of Leeds.

- 11.4 The Mayor was asked how she could use her influence to help rid public places of drug dealers. She replied that she saw her role as working with partners in local authorities and the health sector to prevent people taking drugs in the first place, and ultimately reduce the demand for dealers. The Deputy Mayor talked about their support for the successful Clear, hold, build strategy co-piloted by WYP under which communities persistently affected by organised criminal groups reclaim and rebuild their areas through strong relationships between residents, the police and statutory agencies.

The Mayor reaffirmed her belief that young people need to be directed out of, or kept out of, a life of crime and / or drug taking. She committed to continuing the funding of drug testing in custody suites, a scheme which has been successful in pathwaying low level offenders into rehab schemes. She believed that her role as Mayor under the devolution framework is the jigsaw that can bring many aspects of the fight against crime together.

The Chief Constable updated Panel on the work that the Force do every day with the National Crime Agency and regional drug and firearm bodies. The WYP Serious and Organised Crime Unit focuses on these crimes every day and has precision teams in every district. Their work is done behind the scenes, disrupting supply and networks; this is critical work in the fight against drugs, but doesn't have a visible manifestation for communities.

- 11.5 Panel congratulated West Yorkshire Police for achieving the 2nd fastest average answer time for 999 calls in the country. The Mayor was asked if she was aware of anything specific that may have caused a 2% increase in 999 calls over the last quarter.

The Mayor was not aware of anything specific that would have caused this, and will work with the Chief Constable to drill down into the numbers and flag anything of concern. The DMPC nominee flagged the ongoing abuse of 999, and her previous communications work to highlight this. She also highlighted that one of the precept negotiations with WYP was to around the answering of 999 calls, and she thinks that this has helped drive the Force's achievement here.

- 11.6 The Mayor was asked to share her thoughts around the continuing decline in victim satisfaction, apart from in Wakefield, and whether she was aware of any specific good practice which had influenced this. The Mayor highlighted that national issues often play a part in overall satisfaction levels with the police, and that the sheer volume of casework has meant that communication between victims and officers has not been as frequent as they would like it to be.

The DMPC nominee added that the Policing and Crime Team had worked with black and ethnic minority communities to try to understand and improve victim satisfaction

levels, and this had improved figures from those communities. In terms of Wakefield, she reminded Panel that police officers had spent a considerable amount of time in the community a few years ago, knocking door to door and asking people to sign up for a local alert system. She believed that this work was starting to bear fruit now in the improved satisfaction rates.

- 11.7 A question was asked about the reasons for high non-conviction rates for cases referred to the CPS, which Panel felt was disappointing considering that WYP achieve above average numbers of cases accepted by CPS at first triage.

The DMPC nominee, as Chair of the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB), assured Panel that the Board share the concern and regularly discuss the reasons for this. There is a strong relationship between WYP and the CPS in West Yorkshire and an end to end review has been undertaken to understand the barriers faced by the CPS and the victim journey. The DMPC nominee is convinced that this strong relationship has led to better outcomes. She highlighted the financial support provided by the Mayor for Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs) and Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) and assured Panel that she is committed to supporting victims to continue with the prosecution process to completion. She has heard positive anecdotal evidence that the support of ISVAs and IDVAs has kept victims in the system. She expressed her desire to continue along this whole system approach path if re-confirmed as the DMPC nominee, and to continue to work towards solutions to the continued backlog in the court system.

- 11.8 Panel welcomed the further positive steps in the recruitment of new officers and staff towards increasing the proportion of the workforce from ethnic minorities.

11.9 RESOLVED

- 11.9.1 Panel noted the report.

12. Published Key Decisions

- 12.1 The Published Key Decisions were noted.

13. Mayor's Response to any current issues

- 13.1 The Mayor commended the work of West Yorkshire Police (WYP) in securing the recent sentencing of Rashane Douglas for the double murder of Joshua Clark and Haidar Shah in Halifax in October 2023.

- 13.1 The Mayor shared that she had recently attended the annual West Yorkshire Policing Awards, which had been a great event, celebrating and recognising officers for their work and bravery. One of the winners, PC Jess Bell, has subsequently been nominated for a national bravery award for her actions at an incident involving a man armed with a knife on the roof of a property.
- 13.2 The Mayor is establishing a new West Yorkshire Custody Detention Scrutiny Panel, and applications are invited for a Chair and panel of independent members.
- 13.3 The Mayor informed Panel that the planned update on the recent WYP PEEL inspection report had been delayed until after the General Election but would be brought to the next possible Panel meeting.
- 13.4 The Mayor referenced her manifesto promise for a new strategy to tackle serious violence and looked forward to working with Panel to realise this over her four year term.

14. Agreed Actions Log

- 14.1 The Agreed Actions log was noted.

15. Forward Agenda Plan

- 15.1 The Forward Agenda Plan was noted.

16. Complaints Received by the Panel

- 16.1 The Chair of the Complaints Sub-Panel gave an update on the ongoing complaint against the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime (DMPC) nominee. Since publication of the meeting papers, the Sub-Panel had met again to consider further information received. A decision was made not to uphold the complaint, and both parties have been notified.

In addition, as set out in the Panel report, a new complaint against the Mayor of West Yorkshire had been received and recorded. The complaint had been referred to the WYCA Monitoring Officer on the same day in line with the regulations. Panel have been formally notified of the outcome of the complaint and that it would not be in the public interest to pursue investigation, and the matter has been closed.

17. Any Other Business

17.1 There was no other business.

18. Date and Time of Next Meeting

18.1 The next meeting of the Police and Crime Panel will be held at 10.00am on Friday, 12th July 2024 in the Old Court Room, Town Hall, Wakefield.